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STATE FOR AF/W-PDAVIS, IO, G/AIAG, AND ISN

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [TBIO](#) [AORC](#) [PREL](#) [KFLU](#) [WHO](#) [LI](#)

SUBJECT: LIBERIA ISSUES PRESS STATEMENT ON KEY U.S.
OBJECTIVES AT THE ANNUAL WORLD HEALTH ASSEMBLY

REF: A. A) MONROVIA 00541

[B](#). B) STATE 61739

[1](#). Acting Minister of Health S. Mohammed Sheriff called Poloff May 15 to alert Embassy to the Ministry of Health's issuance of a press release along the lines of the U.S. objectives at the annual World Health Assembly. The press release appeared in the May 15 "Inquirer" newspaper.

[2](#). Text of press release follows:

Begin Text.

The Ministry of Health and Social Welfare supports U.S. Government's recommendation for the retention of smallpox virus stocks and development of community strategy for pandemic influenza mitigation.

The Ministry of Health and Social Welfare strongly supports the position taken by the United States Government and other countries to support the continuation of the critical research with the live smallpox virus (Variola) stocks at the two official repositories (in the United States and the Russian Federation) sanctioned by the World Health Organization (WHO) to enable the critical research potential to continue and avoid any premature setting of arbitrary date for the destruction of these vaccine stockpiles.

The Ministry of Health is of the conviction that retention of these smallpox stocks will be of greater benefit to developing countries for a better diagnostic tools for new anti-viral drugs and safer smallpox vaccines for people with compromised immune systems, such as cancer patients, recipient of organ transplants and those who are HIV positive. The Ministry of Health and Social Welfare also welcomes proposal forwarded by the U.S. Government for the development of a Community Strategy for Pandemic Influenza Mitigation that would provide domestic planning guidance focused on several measures other than vaccination and drug treatment that might be useful during influenza pandemic to reduce its harm.

The Ministry of Health and Social Welfare also expresses profound gratitude to the U.S. Government for the provision of \$10 (ten) million to the World Health Organization to expand the development and manufacturing of infrastructure for Influenza Vaccine in developing countries.

End Text.

Mazel